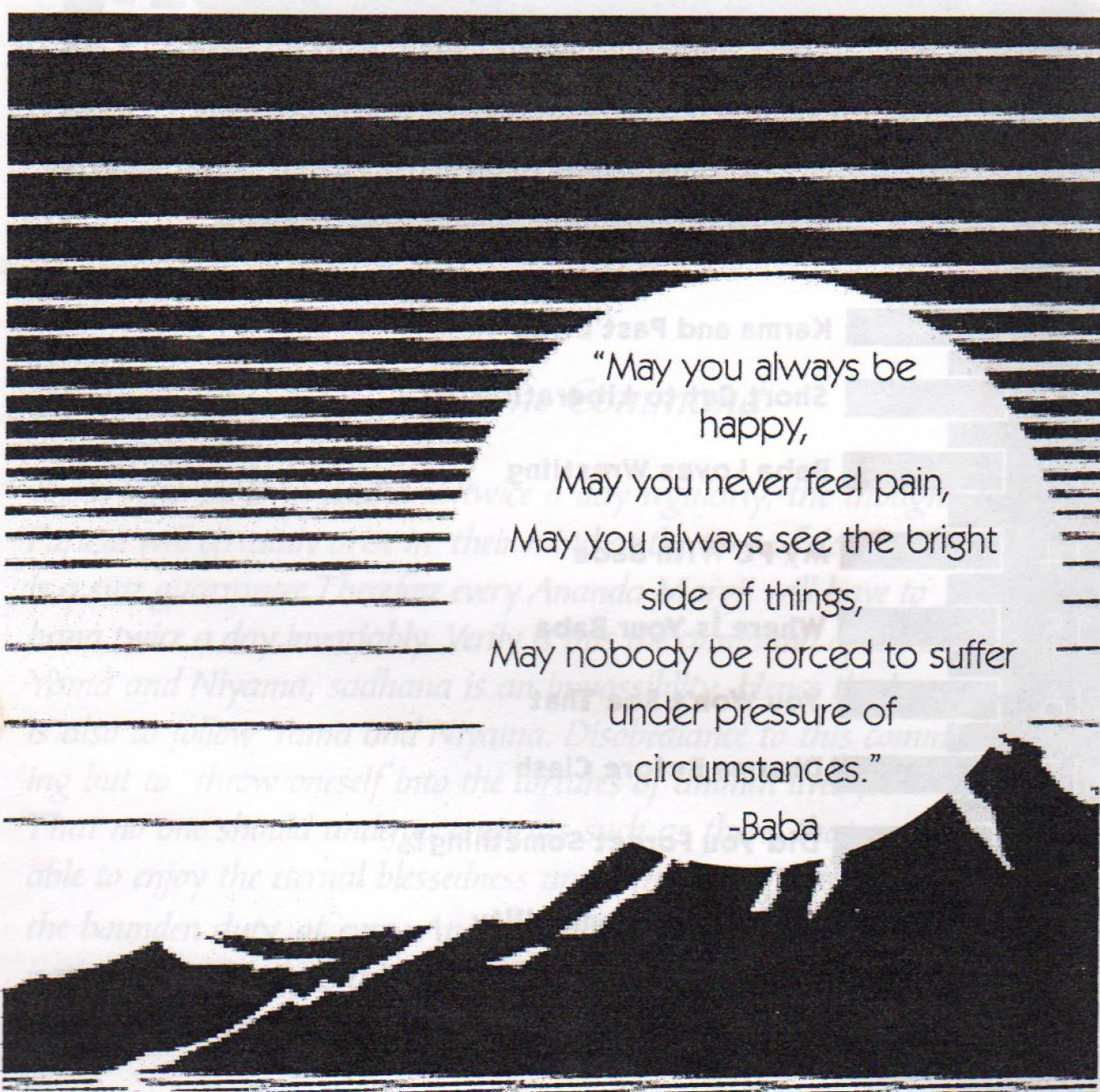


PRANAM

ANANDA MARGA SUVA SECTORIAL NEWSLETTER - May 1999



"May you always be
happy,
May you never feel pain,
May you always see the bright
side of things,
May nobody be forced to suffer
under pressure of
circumstances."

-Baba

BABA'S BIRTHDAY SPECIAL
BABA STORY BONANZA!

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Editorial



This issue of **Pranam** is a special Baba's Birthday issue so there is an emphasis on Baba stories. Those of you who receive 'Sadvipra Samgha' on the e-mail (a Margii "cyber-conference"), will recognise many of the stories here. There is a special section of stories from our Dada Sarvabhodananda (SDM) and a very personal Baba story from our Didi Ananda Prajina Paramita (GP).

We are also fortunate to have received a story from Ravi Batra, the famous Margii author with the US best-selling book, **The Great Depression of 1990**. Here he is writing not about economics but his devotional experiences with Baba in Europe.

Baba has many forms and ways of manifesting. Each devotee experiences Him according to their samskaras and His grace. But whatever the way, it is always intimate and personal.

During this time of His birthday, let us remember his greatness and grace. Ultimately our happiness and victory can only come according to our closeness and surrender to Him.

Supreme Command

Those who perform sadhana twice a day regularly, the thought of Parama Parusa will certainly arise in their mind at the time of death. Their liberation is a sure guarantee. Therefore every Ananda Margii will have to perform sadhana twice a day invariably. Verily is this the command of the Lord. Without Yama and Niyama, sadhana is an impossibility. Hence the Lord's command is also to follow Yama and Niyama. Disobedience to this command is nothing but to throw oneself into the tortures of animal lives for crores of years. That no one should undergo torments such as these, that everyone might be able to enjoy the eternal blessedness under the loving shelter of the Lord, it is the bounden duty of every Ananda Margii to endeavour to bring all to the path of bliss. Verily is this a part and parcel of sadhana to lead others along the path of righteousness.

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If possible, send material on floppy (saved in ascii, RTF or text) or via email

Published by Ananda Marga

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19 Lovel St, Katoomba NSW 2780.

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Inspiration: Shrii Shrii Anandamurti

Aesthetic Science

Shrii Shrii Anandamurti

The excellence of Aesthetic Science lies in the fact that one derives joy from the manifold expressions of Parama Purusa. From the aesthetic point of view there is no other entity but Parama Purus'a. "He is my personal property. I have never come across any other entity that can compare with my Parama Purus'a." No other category of Bhakta thinks or talks in such a way about Parama Purus'a. "That is why I love Him from the core of my heart. It is not enough that I get joy by loving Him. I should act in such a way so that He also gets joy." Both approaches coincide in the science of aesthetics. If we go even deeper, to the very root, we find that whatever we observe in this universe—animals, birds, trees, plants, land, water, hills, mountains, sun, moon, stars and so many other things that we love in numerous ways—all are but the limited expressions of Parama Purus'a.

*Tomarejano bhaloba'siya'chi shataru'pe
shatabar yuge aniba'r*

"I have loved you, oh Lord, in Your manifold forms, in countless ways, throughout the ages."

You have appeared before me in innumerable forms, on numerous occasions. You are *akhandacidaekarasa*. You are an unbroken, continuous flow. You have appeared before me, sometimes as the trough and sometimes as the crest of that flow. These limited expressional waves of Cosmic bliss are connected together by one indivisible thread-like beads of jewels strung together. Each of your expressions is like a jewel to me and stringing these jewels

together I am trying to catch hold of You, trying to realize my fullness within your existence. Hence it is said that even if the Jivas do not get Parama Purus'a in His entirety still they can catch a glimpse of Him and thereby become thrilled with delight. What is this world like?

*Beshechi bhalo ei dharare
mugdha cokhe dekhechi tare
phuler dine diyechi raci gan
se gane mor jarano ankhi
se gane mor rahuk smrti
ar jai kichu hauk abasan*

Human beings become overjoyed receiving the limited expressions of joy from Him. They look at the world with



its profusion of changing forms and become fascinated by them. When this feeling deepens and becomes permanent it turns into love. Suppose I see something. The vibration radiating from that object produces a sympathetic vibration in the mind. One begins to feel that he or she should assimilate that vibration, that he or she

should accept it as his or her own. This is what is known as attraction. When people subjectivize that attraction in the psychic arena it is called love. What is attraction in the beginning turns into love when it becomes permanent. When we grow very close to something in this world, our initial attraction turns into love. We watch the various expressions of Parama Purus'a. We like everything. We like the flower, we like its fragrance, we like the green field in the rainy season, we like the lofty Himalayan peaks and if our mind remains in contact with these congenial vibrations for a long time then, because our mind returns again and again to its object, to these congenial vibrations, our like turns into love and is eventually transformed into a permanent Samskara.

Parama Purus'a has been manifesting Himself in numerous non-integral forms and He Himself has become the object of adoration for the Jivas. One who closely observes and tries to understand His expressions comes to love Him. One has no recourse but to love that Entity whose love for the Jivas is being expressed in an infinite variety of forms. A person who treats these limited expressions of Parama Purus'a as mere mundane objects of enjoyment will never know real love in his or her life. Though finding oneself amidst an unbroken flow of Cosmic bliss, the heart becomes as parched as desert sand. One who cannot love Parama Purus'a cannot love the world either. Life becomes filled with frustration.

*"This quinquemental world has been
born out of joy, is being maintained in*

joy and into sacred joy it will melt. "

This is the self-same joy which human beings realize out of love for Parama Purus'a. This joy is the aesthetic enjoyment of the supra-aesthetic Entity. The devotees argue that Parama Purusa was alone and it was monotonous for Him. If there are some people gathered together then Parama Purusa gets the opportunity to scold them, love them etc. This pleases Him. If necessary He will tell someone you're hungry. You should go and eat. To another He says "Look, don't overeat, it will ruin your health." This is how the world came into being. When Parama Purus'a was all alone, He was obviously unhappy. He was One and became many, and began to joyfully sport with His creation.

*Sa va' yesha tada' drasta na pashyaddr -
shyamekarat
me ne santara'tma'nam suptashakti rasup -
tadrk*

My Vrajagopala, my Krsna, was all alone. How painful it must have been to remain in this terrible loneliness. It was no joke for Him to suffer horrible loneliness. When left alone in an empty house anyone would become extremely restless for company. My Parama Purusa was in such a condition. He had the capacity to see, and hear everything, to administer over all, to play with all, to love and scold all, but since there was no other entity He was deprived of this happiness. Just to rid Himself of this oppressive loneliness He thought internally, "I will become many" and He became many for He had one rare occult power-Prakamya. That is, everything takes shape as per His desire. He wanted to become many and He became many. In that way, His divine sport is going on eternally. Thus it has been said

*Anandaddhyeva khalima'ni
bhuta'ni ja'yante*

"All the created beings have been born out of Ananda . "

He has created the jiivas, created this

universe for the sake of joy alone.

Anadena ja'ta'ni jivanti. These living beings also want to live for Anandam alone. It is for the limited waves of joy emanating from Parama Purus'a, which are so dear to the Jiivas, that they want to go on living, not to die. Even a hundred year old man or woman doesn't want to die. They may say it aloud but actually they don't want to die. People don't want to part from the countless objects of love that surround them. But one whose superficial attraction has given way to true love understands that these objects are perishable in nature. Those who think that if they can remain in constant contact with the unchanging Entity it would be far more blissful and so they don't develop attachment to any worldly object. In the final stage, when one merges one's identity into Parama Purusa one attains the state of Supreme Beatitude.



My Impressions of Baba's Triumphant European Tour

Ravi Batra

One morning in the last week of April 1979, I was absorbed in deep meditation when I felt an urgent call from Baba to come see him in Europe which he was due to visit for a month. I was a bit puzzled by this call, for I had already visited India during December 1978 and had attended the Patna DMC held on New Year's Day. Of course, Baba had been extremely busy then; there were 20,000 Margiis attending that DMC, all vying for his attention and love. I didn't have much contact with Baba, but I had gone only to have his darshan which I did have four or five times. Each darshan had overwhelmed me, for I had not seen Baba for eight long years. While Baba had been in jail during seven of those eight years, I had been in extreme physical agony and pain. I had passed through four major crises and countless minor ones. It appears that my relentless meditation and quest for God had earned me unbelievable mental and physical tortures from Avidya Maya whom I had literally begun to like. Avidya gave me her constant company. Not a day would pass when something did not go wrong.

During those eight long years I had often felt helpless and forlorn. With Baba in jail and practically out of reach, I had no one to turn to except the Baba within me. Most often I had suffered in silence, but at times I would cry out loud: "O Baba, O God, have you forgotten me? Whom have I done wrong! I can't even hurt an ant, and here I am passing

through unrelenting physical pain!"

Several times Baba had come to console me in meditation

*The less you want
from Baba*

The more He gives

and dreams, but alas! my physical and mental anguish had to last the full seven-year cycle.

Under the relentless onslaught of Avidya, I had begun to feel Baba's constant presence in my heart.

When I felt the call to come to Europe, all these past memories came to the surface again. I didn't have the faintest idea why Baba was calling me this time. Under the relentless onslaught of Avidya, I had begun to feel Baba's constant presence in my heart. The call from Baba was unmistakable, but its meaning was unclear.

There are many Margiis who, when the call comes from Baba, forget everything around them and rush to see him. I am one of those lunatics. And nothing was going to stop me from going to Europe. So, on the 7th of May, after handing over my duties to my colleagues, I was in the plane to London, from where I planned to go to a place called Fiesch, a small town in Switzerland where a DMC was to be held on May 12th. This incidentally turned out to be Baba's birthday.

At the London airport, I was joined by a close friend and Margii, Satish Kohli, and the two of us reached Fiesch the after-

noon of May 9th. The DMC committee had arranged for all Margiis to stay in a dormitory, whereas Baba, who had arrived at Fiesch three days earlier, was to stay in a guesthouse.

Ac. Karunanda Avadhuta, who headed the DMC committee, couldn't have selected a better site for Baba's historic DMC in Europe. Fiesch is a small town, surrounded by verdure and towering hills which

remain white with snow all year round. Here and there you can spot miniature waterfalls which add to its beauty and its tranquil atmosphere. The mild drone of the running water has a natural soothing effect on the mind and you feel like meditating much of the time.

Satish and I finished our evening meditation and then rushed to Baba's house. There we found a throng of fifty people, all singing Baba Nam Kevelam. Some were standing outside the door, some were sitting on the lawn; some had their eyes closed, some had them open. But they all showed a spiritual glow on their faces, their hearts overflowing with devotional music and singing. It was time for Baba's evening walk, and the European Margiis had gathered outside his residence to catch a fleeting glimpse of the One they had invited more than eight years ago. Baba's car was parked on the lawn and Baba would have to walk from the door to get into it. It would take him only a few seconds to get in the car, but to see him for those

precious seconds, many Margiis had been waiting and meditating outside for hours.

When I saw the huge crowd waiting at Baba's door, I felt discouraged. I dearly wanted to see and talk to Baba again, but I didn't have the heart to compete with European Margiis for his attention. I had met and talked with Baba in India as early as 1964. He had showered his infinite grace on me in a series of personal contacts. And his love and grace were overflowing when I saw him in 1968 and then again in 1970. I had seen and conversed with Baba so many times, but with Baba there is no saturation point. You want to see him again and again.

All three of us were dumb-founded, for we had thought to have gotten away with it: Nothing

At Fiesch, there were many Margiis who had never seen Baba before. I felt they had priority over me in getting attention from him. Besides, I consoled myself that Baba was seated in my heart. I told Satish, who was as eager to have eye-contact with Baba as myself, that I would wait until Baba had seen everyone else.

While I was so talking to Satish, my name was called by Ac. Ramananda Avadhuta, who was Baba's personal secretary. Dada Ramananda asked me to accompany Baba in His car ride as well as in His evening walk that was to follow. I was overjoyed for here I was ready to concede the field to everyone else, but was picked to go with Baba in spite of myself.

I had brought with me a tape recorder to record some songs of Baba Nam Kevalam. I had not expected to be in Baba's car so soon, if at all. As I entered the car, the tape recorder entered with me. I should not normally mention this incident, because recording conversation in the field-walk is strictly prohibited, except that it has a comical ending, and reveals Baba's sense of humor as well as His omniscience.

Once inside the car, I casually turned on the recorder, hoping that no one would notice it. And no one did. Baba talked about his treatment in the jail; how he had been poisoned by the jail doctor; how he had remained on a cot without once touching the earth for four years and eight months and so on. As he described his treatment in the jail, I was on the verge of tears, but I somehow controlled myself. I felt that Baba was letting me record this conversation for future generations.

The intriguing part of the tape-recorder incident occurred on May 14th. May 13th was the last day of Baba's stay in Fiesch. Satish and I decided to secretly record Baba's speech in his darshan that

evening. We were going to bring the tape back for the benefit of the U.S. Margiis. We were sitting on the floor in a big hall, mingled in a crowd of 600 people, quite far from the dais on which Baba was seated. There is no way anyone could have seen us using the recorder—or so we thought. At the end of the program in Fiesch, I had in my possession two tapes, one regarding my conversation with Baba in the car, and the other recording Baba's lecture on the evening of May 13th.

The next day, while going to Geneva by train, Satish and another Margii, Naresh Bector, who came to know about the tapes, argued with me that the first tape was more important than the second. Satish wanted to take both tapes with him make copies and then send them back to me. However, I insisted on at least keeping one tape. Finally, Satish agreed to take with him the first tape which we all three considered more important than the other.

Satish and Naresh were going to see Baba off at the Geneva airport, whereas I

was going to travel with him to Frankfurt and later to Berlin and Hanover. Both Satish and Naresh said their parting namaskar to Baba, and He responded with the same. Suddenly, Baba turned around and, with a mischievous smile, said to them, "The other tape is no less important." All three of us were dumb-founded, for we had thought to have gotten away with it. Nothing can be hidden from Baba.

Another incident revealing a different aspect of Baba's personality also had its beginning at the general darshan of May 13th. Just before Baba was ready to speak, a Margii from Italy stood up in the hall and started saying something in Italian. He was quickly shouted down by the audience which was eager to hear Baba; but Baba asked the Italian Margii to come near him and do what he wanted to do. None of us in the hall except the Italians knew what the Margii had in mind. The Margii went near Baba and said something in his own language. Baba sat motionless, showing no awareness at all of his command over Italian. Not until someone translated the Margii's words into English did Baba make any gesture. After that he let the Margii perform his solo-drama for two minutes and asked him to sit down. I was somewhat perplexed by the whole episode, for I knew that Baba could converse in all languages and that he had missed an excellent opportunity to let everyone in the audience know about it.

The answer to my puzzle came six days later. About five Margiis including myself were sitting on the floor of the Frankfurt airport around Baba who was seated on a chair. One Margii started singing an Italian song. I couldn't understand the song but was highly moved by his devotion which lit up his face. Thinking that Baba didn't know Italian, he proceeded to translate his song into English. Baba told him that his translation was not correct, and he went on to describe the roots of the Italian words in the song.

While Baba was busy teaching the Italian Margii his Italian, my query was also answered. It is a general rule with Baba to reveal his nature only to those imbued with devotion. He has no use for miracles; nor does he want to impress anyone with his extraordinary faculties. Amidst the 600 strong audience in the hall on the evening of May 13th, there were some strong devotees and some egotistic intellectuals. If he had revealed to them his mastery of Italian, it would have been a sort of miracle or display of powers. And Baba, of course, avoided that. But before a devoted Margii, whose heart was overflowing with devotion and who sought to make Baba understand his feelings in English, Baba readily revealed himself.

The evening darshan of May 13th was the climax of Baba's stay at Fiesch. Ever since Baba's arrival, the devotion and fervour of Margiis had been increasing like a crescendo. Baba also changed his talks in tune with their sentiment. Each day he addressed the audience twice. His earlier discourses touched upon spiritual art, music and dance in society. He also spoke of Fiesch as the place where human beings had first originated on the planet earth some 600 million years ago. As days passed, Baba began emphasizing the devotional sentiment as the one infallible means for mental peace and selfless service to society. In the DMC on the night of May 12th, he first defined the term Baba as the "ultimate father," and then said that Parama Purusha, the infinite conscious entity, is therefore the Baba of the Universe.

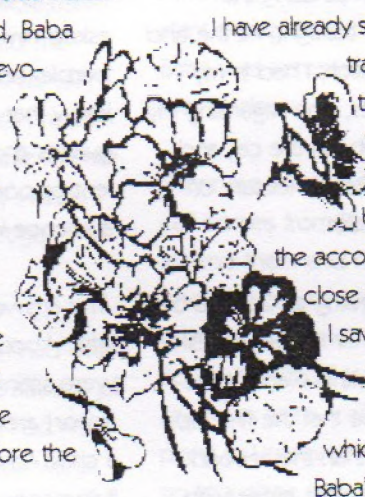
The next day's evening darshan was simply saturated with devotional sentiment. There Baba gave two reasons why Parama Purusha is forced to take birth from time to time. First, the human heart seeks to enjoy infinite love and

beautitude form a personal entity, and since Parama Purusha is an impersonal entity, he has to come into contact with the five rudimental factors and appears in the human form to satisfy the human longing for love. Second, every once in a while, society begins to degenerate into stagnation; therefore when degeneration abounds, Parama Purusha descends to accelerate the forward march of society.

Ever since Baba's arrival, the devotion and fervour of Margiis had been increasing like a crescendo.

When that infinite cognitive entity takes human form, he is known as Taraka Brahma. After saying all this, Baba paused for a while, and then said, "that Taraka is the Baba of the created world. It is for him that you sing Baba Nam Kevelam."

These were Baba's parting words in Fiesch. As he was leaving the hall, several Margiis were crying. Many others blocked his exit; they wanted to have one last look at their dearest one. Others sat in silence, meditating, contemplating the wonderful new world that had opened to them in just a few days.



I have already said that I had decided to travel with Baba upon his trip to Hanover. While in the airplane from Geneva to Frankfurt, there had been a scramble among the accompanying Margiis to sit as close as possible to Baba. When I saw that scramble, I decided not to compete, and consequently got a seat which was the farthest from Baba's seat. Actually few Margiis

were able to sit near Baba because the seating was not pre-arranged. On its way to Frankfurt, the plane made a short stop at another city, at which some passengers got down. And, of course, there was another mad rush to get near Baba, but Dada Karunananda

intervened and asked me to come forward. Once again the same thing had happened: I got to sit near Baba even after conceding the field to others.

I have written some articles and books on world history and Prout, but without apparently consulting with Baba or anyone else in Ananda Marga. My writings have always been inspired by the Baba within

me, but until that plane journey I was not cent-percent sure if my views were correct or if I could speak for Ananda Marga. Furthermore, I had a faint desire to get some hints about Prout from Baba.

In the airplane, Baba himself started the conversation. He said to Dada Ramananda, "Ravi is one of Prout's theoreticians." Then he turned to me, asking me to write two more books on Prout, one dealing with its physico-psycho aspects, and the other with its psycho-spiritual aspects. I felt so wonderful, as Baba had addressed himself to both the questions that for some time had been in the back of my mind.

Ever since meeting Baba in Fiesch, I was floating in the air. I was grateful to him for all his attention which I loved but which I had not asked for. However, the best was yet to come.

We arrived at Frankfurt at 5 p.m. As usual Baba's plane was late. From the airport we were driven to a small town called Mainz where we were supposed to spend four days.

In sharp contrast to Fiesch, there were very few Margiis at Mainz, and we experienced the most overflowing love, attention and grace from Baba. The last time I had experienced such grace was in Jamalpur in 1964. Since then I had passed through fifteen years of hell. I

had faced innumerable problems of a variety and intensity that would boggle the mind. And the only thing that had saved me from lunacy was the one question I would ask myself before performing any action: "Will it hurt or please my Baba?" And if there was the slightest doubt about the propriety of any action, I would shun it completely.

That long and fierce struggle with my mind and environment finally paid dividends at Mainz. Baba gave me his attention as never before. He talked about my interests to others, at times in my absence, at others in my presence. Several times I blushed and felt embarrassed, but inwardly I felt blissful and even cried. It was not the praise that mattered, but the fact that I finally had seemed to capture my Baba's heart, which all my life had been my only desideratum. One remark from Baba will remain printed on my heart forever. In my absence, he said to Mr. Rathj, who accompanied Baba from India, "Ravi loves me very much." These words have healed all my past wounds.

The wonderful thing about all this was that Baba's grace was flowing to me so unexpectedly. I had gone to have his darshan, not to get any problem solved or get resolution of any question. Most of the time when he talked to me, I would be sitting in silence, in a daze, wondering how Parama Purusha speaks, how he drinks water, how he laughs and smiles. At times I tried to talk back to Baba, but my tongue would be tied. Many times I had Baba all to myself,

but he talked and I faintly listened.

I left Baba at the Hanover airport. As I said my parting namaskar to Baba, he looked at me with a smile. I felt an electrical charge entering into my body. As I sat in the returning plane, my whole being was electrified. I happened to touch an acquaintance at London, and that person too got electrified for a few hours. And I still feel that electric current running through my spine. This way, the less I wanted from Baba, the more he gave.

Ananda Palli Afternoon

*Sometimes,
So few words to say.*

Just watching...

*Breath coming in,
going out.*

*Mantra,
Shuffling around
in my mind
like grandmother's
slippers.*

*Not much more.
That's enough.*

Jayanti



Karma and Past Lives

Didi Ananda Japasiddha

This story is actually a sequel to another story which I'm not telling right now. That was my Dharma Samiksha experience. For those who don't know what in the world that is, Dharma Samiksha is conduct review. That was the time when Baba invented a new way to scare us out of our wits while trying to knock some sense into us. In my particular experience, He opened up many doors and left some of them not completely closed. Dharma Samiksha was the time when Baba would scold and beat us for things we did in the past, maybe in our past lives, too.

After that most amazing experience, every sadhana I did was preoccupied by those images. And since Baba had scolded me for various conduct mistakes, I thought about those mistakes frequently. I began to feel bad about them. I started to wonder why I had been born in a family which introduced me to such things in the first place. "Yeah Baba, why didn't you make me born in the right family in the first place? Why wasn't I born in a Margii family and doing sadhana from the age of three? It's all Your fault!" You know how we always blame Him for our problems. And my mind was just wondering Why? Why? Why? Why? Ohhh that curiosity. They say it kills cats. I have enough to kill more than a few. And when you keep thinking about something so intensely, eventually you may get it. That's why it is so important to be careful what

you ideate on. Sort of Monkey's Paw and all that. Well I was ideating all right, whether I knew it or not. And I eventually got it, too, for better or for worse.

At that time I was posted in Cairo Sector. I was in Cyprus. In Cairo Sector I never knew quite what to do with myself. It was nothing like Nairobi Sector where I rush all the time and can never get my work done. There I would wake up every morning and

staring into space and straightening the cloth with my fingers. Actually, I was staring into the dark hole left from pulling down the table. It made a perfect backdrop.

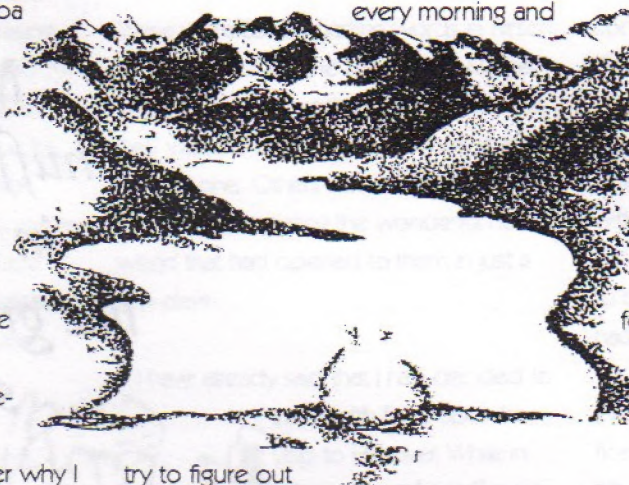
First of all I must explain that I have always been a person with poor visual imagination. I have a very good ear for music and language, but my *citta* has always been devoid of pictures. I never dreamed in colour and I have to work at imagery.

So when I started to see vivid images in that dark hole, I was very surprised. Actually I was seeing what seemed to be memories. They were mine, but I was a different person. Immediately I knew this was my past life. I could feel the feelings of the other person and hear the thoughts, but the body was different and the time was a different time.

try to figure out what I was going to do that day. I would have to work hard to keep myself busy. Well, when you don't know what to do, you can always do more sadhana. And these things happened partly as a result of that.

One day I was doing my ironing in the bathroom. The bathroom was large and I had something rigged up for ironing in one corner. There was a drawer which pulled out like a small table. Inside there was a socket and I put my small travellers iron there and ironed. This day I was doing ironing as usual, but I was doing it without looking at it. I was

The first thing I saw was that I was male. I was in a dark dim dungeon or prison with stone walls and torches mounted on the walls. I was bound with my arms behind me and I was sitting. There was some type of device with two metal prongs in front of my face. My jailers lined the device up and set it swinging back and forth in front of me. It swung back and forth a few times and then it came right up to my face and poked out my two eyes and I was blind. I did not die immediately. I was kept in that prison until the end of my life, but I was in darkness because I was blind. Life was cold, damp, and dark.



Then there was a gap in the images, like a blankness. It was sort of like a movie and this was leader before the next scene.

Then it started again. The last scenes I had seen from out of the eyes. If you think about your memories, I think you'll notice that sometimes you remember yourself in the first person, seeing from your own eyes. Other memories are more objective, for whatever reason, and you see yourself from outside your body, as if in third person. Well the next life I saw from outside the body and dimly. This time I was a woman — a blind woman. This woman used to make a living for herself by doing chores for

a dress and, as usual, I put it off until after the last minute. The night before it was due I hid in the closet with the pieces and finished sewing it in the pitch dark. I got a "B" on it! Ha!

I started wearing glasses in primary school. Everyone in my family on both sides wears glasses. My grandfather was an optometrist. My eyes are abnormally sensitive to touch. Though my grandfather tried to give me contacts, I went through hell to put them on. I finally developed a technique of putting them on at the edge of my eye and sliding them into place because I could never stop that instinct to close my eyes when I saw something coming toward my

Another car had a leak over the driver's side of the windshield so that whenever it rained, water would pour in on the inside of the windshield, immune to the effects of the wipers. On another car, the wipers fell off on the driver's side. Defrosters never work on the driver's side. And so on and so on. Like I said, it was a flood of connections.

After this first incident of seeing my past lives I was very impressed with myself. "Wow! I saw my past lives!" It was very mysterious and interesting. But it didn't satisfy any of the old questions. What I had seen seemed more like a result rather than a cause. Why had I been blinded in the first place? In fact, these few scenes only made the curiosity worse. After about two weeks, though, it happened again. This time I was in the bathroom again, spacing out as usual. When it started this time, I was more careful to be still so I wouldn't miss anything. The first scene I saw was

myself as a kind of Indian sadhu, male again. I was doing meditation. It was very dim, as if so long ago, and inside of myself I knew this was around the time of Shiva. I didn't see much more than myself doing meditation. Then the blankness came again. After a few seconds of that blankness, there I was again. Again I was a monk. This time I was a Christian monk. The area had an arid climate, with goats and burros, olive trees and grapevines — in fact very much like Cyprus. Later I decided it must have been Cyprus, probably Paphos. There is a history of hermit monks in Cyprus. We were in a community of monks, but we were also like hermits and didn't mix much. It was within the first 300 years or so after the death of Jesus Christ. Spiritually, I tried very hard in that life. I saw myself doing lots of meditation, lots of fasting, lots of penance. Yet I was frustrated. Something was

I was in a dark dim dungeon or prison with stone walls and torches mounted on the walls. I was bound with my arms behind me and I was sitting.

other people. She would scrub floors and she would do IRONING. All of these things she would do without being able to see. When she was ironing, she would smoothen the clothes with her fingers. Then it was over. That's all I saw. I kept waiting for more but it was over for now.

As soon as it was finished, I had a flood of realizations about all the things in my life that this related to. Especially in childhood, people do things that reveal their past life samskaras, if anyone were watching. I remembered so many things. I used to practice in case I might go blind. I would turn out the lights and try to move around without bumping the furniture. Still now, I don't worry too much whether the lights are on or off. I used to think I should learn Braille, just in case. Helen Keller was my heroine. Once in Home Economics, in 8th grade, I was supposed to sew

pupil — even my own finger. For the same reason I developed my own method of eye washing during half bath which doesn't force me to splash water in my open eyes.

As a worker, I have owned several cars which caused vision problems for the driver. In one car, the fuses would burn out when I was driving at night and the lights would switch off and I would have to drive the rest of the way in the dark. It happened frequently. I had another car which had frequent alternator problems which would cause the car to stop if I left the lights on at night. This trouble would happen when I was far from home and driving at night and suddenly I would have to choose between having the car quit or turning off the lights.

Once I drove for two hours with no lights until the police stopped me.

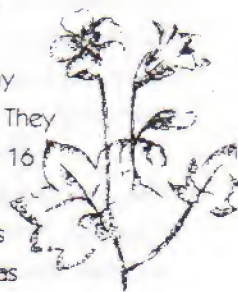
holding me back in my meditation, but I didn't know what it was. I saw many scenes from that life, a very hard and austere life. Finally, I saw the death scene. I saw that I was lying on what seemed to be a bed of sticks and leaves, but I wasn't interested in the situation. There was a young monk with me there trying to take care of me, but I wasn't interested. I knew I was dying and I was trying to focus my whole mind on God. And I was praying. As I remembered it, I could both hear the conscious thoughts and understand the deeper meaning in the heart. The words were, "Oh Lord, please allow me to be reborn at the same time as Jesus Christ." I don't know if it is possible to go back in time, but I seemed to think so. It also seems the idea of reincarnation was common at that time.

The inner meaning of these words was, "Oh Lord, please let me be reborn in the presence of a realized spiritual master because I need that direct guidance to get any further." That was my dying wish.

We went to Catholic school which meant attending Mass every day, so I had a lot of opportunities to think about God. I remember one time being in the choir in the 3rd grade. I suddenly fell to the floor and began sobbing uncontrollably. I kept thinking, "Oh why wasn't I born at the same time as Jesus Christ? I missed!" Where in the world did I get the idea that I could choose? Once in the 4th grade, I started drawing pictures of what it looked like in the time of Jesus — not pictures of Jesus, but of the times — how people dressed, market scenes, the goats and burros, the houses, people walking on the roads, the fields. I just started drawing and my teacher was so fascinated by the realism of my drawings that she kept giving me more and more sheets of paper until I finally finished it. She was surprised because I had never really been an artist and the pictures seemed very real. She put them all up in a long line around all four walls of the classroom like a mural. I never wanted to be a nun, but as a child I often wished I could be a monk, even

figured out what was wrong in my monk's life. They didn't have 16 points.

One serious problem was that, like many people in the Mediterranean, they drank wine with their meals. Probably it was not a strong wine. Perhaps it was even mixed with water. But Bqba says that even one drop affects your mind. They weren't trying to get drunk. It was just the habit of people where water is scarce and grapes are plentiful. But trying to do that and meditation at the same time is like trying to walk up the down escalator. It may be possible, but you usually get too tired before you get to the top. Then also, they had no idea how to control their vrttis. Their method was mainly suppression, which only makes things worse. It's like that Tolstoy story about Father Sergius.



"Oh Lord, please allow me to be reborn at the same time as Jesus Christ."

Then again it stopped for the day. It was very exciting to have spiritual past lives. And these, too, brought a flood of realizations. My father used to be a Catholic monk before they closed his abbey and he left. Sometimes he would get in his monk mood. He would start getting up at 4 in the morning and do Vespers (a set of prayers). Sometimes he would get us up to do it, too. He was very much attracted to monasteries. He was forever visiting them and he would take us along too. So many of our vacations were visits to monasteries and sewage treatment plants. (He designed them.) Sometimes he would hold us to monk rules, like eat everything on your plate and don't be picky. He was in love with Gregorian chants and would play them often.

though it was impossible. I remember one of those monasteries we visited at the time the monks were chanting. I had the strongest urge to go right in and join them, but a monk stopped me because I was a little girl and not a little boy. I was absolutely furious with him.

As I said, it was a flood of connections. But again, the questions were unanswered and this just made it more complicated. Everything seemed unrelated. Why? Why? Why? Why? The old questions came back again. Well if you ideate on something you're liable to get it. Oh boy! I got it all right. And it was not pleasant. After another two weeks it happened again when I was spacing out again. Again, I kept still to see the details. First of all, I should tell you that I

A woman comes to tempt the monk and he is having a hard time so he chops off one of his fingers to distract his mind with pain. That was the type of attitude — very severe. Suppression rather than facing it and controlling it. So this time I saw a life where I did nothing but a lot of nonsense to release all the suppressed vrttis. The mind was in a bleary confused state and the memories were so bleary that I couldn't even figure out what was going on. I only saw that I was male and that I did nonsense and that I was never happy. I still had that spiritual wisdom inside me which told me that this wasn't the life I wanted. This frustrated me a lot. I wanted to be simple minded and just to enjoy, but everytime I was trying to have fun these thoughts would come to haunt me. I started to say to myself, "I wish I couldn't understand. I wish I couldn't see. I wish I couldn't see. I wish I couldn't see." Until that sort of mantra literally resulted in blindness in more than one

life. One thing I can tell you is that you get what you ask for. This life was so confused that I wasn't sure when it ended or whether it ended and another life started, but the next thing I saw was a death scene or rather I saw my body right after death. I saw myself hanging by a rope around my neck and I knew I had done it to myself. The problem was that these memories were much more vivid than ordinary memories and along with the image I felt all the pain and anguish which had led to that horrible act. Worse than that, it passed next to something after death. I

have no idea if that was a bodiless state, an animal life or what because it was just dark. But it was the most horrible slimy, grating — most awful feeling I have ever got a taste of in my life. The accumulation of all these horrible feelings was so painful that internally I started pushing the whole thing away, feeling that I would drown. I was desperately pushing them all away until it was as if a big door slammed shut. It never opened again. In fact, when I tell the stories now it is just that I remember how I remembered. It is not direct access to those extra cerebral memories.

I certainly understand why we do not normally remember our past lives. It's too much. We have enough problems in one

life. Well I won't get into the connections from that part of my lives, but I finally understood the whole cycle. I understood where the blindness had come from and negative present samskaras. I understood what a mistake suicide is and how fortunate I was to have gotten another body after throwing one away. But I also understood that I had worked really hard to get my opportunities with Baba. My dying wish as a

monk had led to it, but not before I burned a lot of samskaras in several lives — at least three others. And only then did I get any chance to have His direct guidance. I am sure that anyone who takes initiation and especially those who continue their sadhana have had to shed some tears to get that chance. It is not something to throw away. And I would say that to all of you. You have worked very hard to get these opportunities and you must make the best use of them that you can. The chance for initiation, the chance to have the path at least clearly outlined without doubt where the road is — whether you can follow it perfectly is another thing, but you know WHERE the road is. You know which things are harmful, which things are helpful. We are so lucky! And since we have been given so much, we have to do something and not just pass the time away. The opportunity may not come so easily next time.



During the emergency period in India, many Dadas, Didis, and Margiis were thrown into jail. Everyone went through struggles, difficulties and sufferings. One devotee who visited Baba in His prison cell got the courage to ask Baba, "Why are so many Margiis, your children, going through so much struggle and suffering?"

Baba was very touched by the question. He closed His eyes as if He was crying internally. The Margii felt bad that he asked such a question. However, Baba opened His eyes, looked directly to the devotee with infinite understanding and compassion and said, "Yes, my children are struggling. They are suffering. But I gave them struggle and suffering because I love them, because I want them to be happy. It's true that they are facing many difficulties but in reality, compared to normal people, they are happier." Then Baba continued and said, convey to them this message from me, "None of my Margiis will ever be deprived of their basic necessities of life. This I guarantee."

Shortcut to Liberation

Stories by Dada Sarvabodhananda

One time while I was still in training I had to extend my visa. I went to Patna to extend it because Baba's residence was there. That was before Baba's final arrest that kept Him in Patna jail for many years. When I went to the immigration office, the officer frankly asked me money to process my visa extension even though it was not required. I did not have money so I was upset. I left the immigration office and hurriedly went back to the jagrti to attend Baba's morning darshan at 11:00 am. As I was riding the rikshaw, I thought to myself that I had come to India to get or find liberation, and how was this bribing for visa is part of the whole trip? I decided that I should ask Baba "What is the shortcut to liberation?"

When I arrived at the jagrti, it was full and Baba had just started to talk. I was

inching inside the door at the back. Baba talked about two types of yogis in India. He said one are the Sadhus and the other are the Sanyasiis. The Sadhus wear white clothes, live a simple and pure life, and do not harm anyone, but they don't necessarily do service to humanity. The Sanyasiis wear saffron clothes and have dedicated their lives for a great cause. But one does not become a Sadhu or a Sanyasi by simply wearing white or saffron clothes. White represent purity and saffron represents sacrifice.

Then Baba continued, saying that these Sanyasiis come to live the sanyasi life because they want Liberation. Just as Christians go to church because there is the promise of heaven and without the promised heaven they will not go to church. Similarly these Sanyasiis live the sanyasi life to attain liberation. Then

Baba's vibration became more serious. He spoke in a strong voice and moved His forefinger slowly from side to side to emphasize his point. He said, but you, my Margiis, your liberation is already guaranteed. If only you have understood the Supreme Command in your heart you should know that your liberation is a sure guarantee. Don't bother your mind worrying how to get liberation. Your liberation is already in your pocket. Keep it there. Instead, utilize your mind to find a way to liberate others. Work hard to liberate others. This is the shortcut to liberation.

After that talk of Baba I never thought of liberation. I decided also that I don't want to be liberated. I want only to be with Him wherever He goes to establish Dharma.

Baba Loves Wrestling

The trainees who passed their exams went to Patna where we were with Baba twice a day in His office - morning and evening. One day Baba divided us into two main groups: the tall ones and the short ones. The shorter ones were many so we were further divided into two groups. Every evening, in Baba's small office, we had to wrestle against one another. Baba used to enjoy it so much. The room was small and all the central workers and others were

there to cheer us on. Baba stood behind His table with His fist pounding on the table shouting: Equally strong! Equally great! Use your hands! Use your feet! Everybody had so much fun including the wrestlers.

It was my first wrestling. After a few days it was very tiring but Baba wouldn't allow us to rest. Anyway He kept supplying us with energy to continue the drama. I kept winning so I had to fight everyday. Finally I was declared the winner of my group so I had to fight the

winner of the other group of my category. While I was fighting my last fight, I thought that it would be better to offer this fight to Baba and let the other win. As I was thinking that way, Baba shouted: No my boy! Use your own mind! I understood that He wanted me to fight not for anybody's sake but for everyone's fun. So I fought until I won.

After the final wrestling Baba instructed one Dada that all the participants should do Tandava. I was completely exhaust-

ed and was about to collapse. The Dada told Baba that I was about to faint. Then Baba told them to leave me out and let the others dance. While I was leaning against the wall waiting for all to finish I was feeling tremendous pressure to go to the toilet. I felt completely terrible. Then I heard Baba was going out of the door so without waiting I dragged myself to the other door

where my sandals were ready to rush to the toilet. But I had to wait till Baba passed through. Baba came out from the other door but he had to pass by me. Holding my tummy and my breath with eyes closed I steadied myself. Suddenly I felt someone touching my forehead but I did not pay any attention. As soon as the way was cleared I ran to the toilet. But amazingly as I

arrived there I felt fine. The next morning while we were waiting for Baba, when He walked to his office, He looked at me with the sweetest smile and said: How do you feel now my little boy? I replied: Fine Baba. Then I realized that the touch that I had felt in my forehead was His.

My PC With Baba

When we heard that Baba was arrested in Patna I was very inspired to go to acharya training right away. I felt that Ananda Marga is truly a revolutionary movement. Rudy, Manuel, Dada Sumitanandaji and I arrived from Manila to Patna early in the morning. We were told that immediately we had to proceed to Varanasi because the CBI was coming regularly. Without any questions we took the first train to Varanasi. There we had to wait to have our Personal Contact with Baba before we would be allowed to go to training.

After few days Baba was released and immediately we left for Patna. In the train Dada Sumitanandaji told us to memorise the Supreme Command, Yama and Niyama, and the 15 Shilas because Baba would ask about them. In my mind I visualized how Baba might look: a bright white halo of light around the head or a brilliant white light emanating from the heart, etc. And I prepared some questions in my mind to ask Baba.

The next day we fell in line for PC. I placed myself at the end. When it was my turn I was told to do sataunga pranam as I entered the room. As I lifted my head to get up I saw, not the one I thought of, but what seemed to me to be an ordinary person. Immediately I closed my eyes and lay my face on the floor thinking that I might be in the wrong room. I did not know what to do. Then I heard the sweetest words, "Come my little boy, come...". I stood up and walked towards Baba and forgot everything else.

Then Baba said, "I have been waiting for you. Why did you take so long to come?" No words came out of my mouth. Then Baba smiled and motioned for me to come closer to Him. Then He asked my name and I replied. He asked my father's name and I told Him my worldly father's name. Again Baba asked my father's name and I repeated the same answer.

But He again repeated the same question and I got really irritated. I looked at Baba angry almost grinding my teeth and the word that came out of my mouth was "Ba...ba...." Then Baba smiled and said, "Yes, Baba is your father." I was so relieved I could not help smiling. After that I felt really relaxed and at ease.

Then Baba began to tell me what I had done in my life. Even many things that I had long forgotten. Baba said, "You did such-and-such. And I said, "Yes Baba." Sometimes I said "Yes, Dada" and suddenly I remembered that I was talking to Baba. There were several times that I could not remember the incidents that Baba was talking about, but then He described where it happened, what I was thinking at that time and the details of what I did. Finally I was convinced that Baba was not an ordinary being. If He was not God at least He was not an ordinary human.

"Now, the Supreme Consciousness is the Supreme Witnessing Entity. Whatever your individual consciousness is seeing or feeling, everything is being witnessed by the Supreme Entity. So whatever is being done in the universe is nothing but a mental creation of the Supreme consciousness: everything is within His mind. Everything is within Him, nothing is without. So whatever is being done, He sees, He knows, He feels. This universe is nothing but a mental projection of that Supreme Consciousness".

-Baba

Where Is Your Baba?

Gayatrii

For many years, Baba used to stay at a house in Lake Gardens in Calcutta called Madhu Malancha, meaning "abode of sweet charm". It was filled to the sky with plants from all over the world, whose welfare Baba cherished. Here so many devotees were unspeakably relieved to lay themselves at His feet.

Here so many devotees stood waiting in the hot sun and the pouring rain, singing songs, waiting for Him to come out for His walk in the morning and

a garland with all their hearts and to hear Him, as He gazed with such indescribably effulgent love, say so shyly and sweetly "Are you sure this is for me?" and were blessed to be able to say "O yes, Baba, only for you!" and to watch, in ecstasy and agony, as He slowly walked down the path, and inside.

Later Baba moved to Tiljala, a larger building, which became the new AM headquarters. Many days passed that He had not visited His old residence in Lake Gardens.

residence in Baba's absence stepped forward and, with folded hands, humbly said, "We have, Baba." Then Baba asked with a smile, "And who are you?" The devotee replied "I am my Baba's son". Softly shaking His head, Baba said, "No, no you are Baba." Baba then asked this same Dada, "Suppose that Baba has gone to Tiljala [the new headquarters] and somebody asks you, where is Baba? What will you say?" The devotee replied, "I will say Baba is in Tiljala." Baba then said, "Very good, very good."

Here so many devotees achieved the most difficult of spiritual states simply by the grace of His presence.

evening. Here at Madhu Malancha, with sometimes just a single word, or a single glance, so many devotees learned what it truly means to sob with joy at the experience of His overwhelming tenderness.

Here so many devotees achieved the most difficult of spiritual states simply by the grace of His presence. Here so many people were blessed to offer Him

One day He visited again that sweet abode called Madhu Malancha. (Unknown to the Margis, this was to be His final visit before His Final Departure.) Everyone had decorated the gate, the building, and even the walkways with all sorts of flowers. As Baba came in the gate, everyone joyously welcomed Him, singing Prabhat Samgiit. Then Baba asked, "Who has decorated everything so nicely?" The monk supervising the

And if Baba has gone to Delhi, and someone asks you, where is Baba?" Again the devotee answered, "I will say Baba is in Delhi." Smiling beautifully, Baba said, "Such an intelligent boy! Very good. Very good. But if Baba has gone somewhere and you don't know where He has gone, and someone asks you, where is Baba? What will you say?" The devotee didn't know what to say, so he kept silent. Then, leaning forward with a gaze as glorious as His smile, Baba said slowly, "You will say 'My Baba is in my heart.'"

While Baba was still in jail, one Margii asked Baba, "Baba in the world many different philosophies, civilisations, societies, organisations, and groups came into existence but only to disappear later. How do you guarantee that Ananda Marga will live forever?"

Baba smiled and looked to the Margii directly and said, "I have planted the seed of struggle in Ananda Marga. Struggle never dies. Therefore, Ananda Marga will live forever."

You Won't See That

Dada Citkrsnananda

It happened long before in those early days of Ananda Marga when Dada Para'sattya'nanda was very close to Ba'ba'. He used to visit Ba'ba' to give Him massage. On one such occasion when he was massaging Ba'ba' a dark spot on Baba's right foot drew Dada's attention. Dada could not find any reason for this spot as he knew that Baba never walked bare-foot on thorny places. Out of curiosity Dada asked Ba'ba' the reason for this spot. Ba'ba' avoided this topic by telling that it was not very important to know. Dada's curiosity became stronger and insisted again to Baba to tell the reason. Baba tried to avoid the answer by saying, it's a long story so no need to mention. Dada again more strongly insisted to know the story. Then finally Baba narrated the story.

About 3500 years ago after the Maha'bha'rata war was over and Shrii Krs'n'a' was 80 years old, he had an appointment to meet Arjuna at a particular place in the forest. He was resting under a tree beside a pond in His Laliita Mudra' (placing a foot on another foot) while waiting for Arjuna to come. There were two Avadhutas with him. [Ba'ba' commented that Shrii Krs'n'a had twelve Avadhutas.]

A hunter was passing by who mistook the beautiful feet of Shrii Krs'n'a for an animal and shot a poisonous arrow at His foot. His body became affected by the poison and began to turn blue. The Avadhutas who were with Him was shocked. Shrii Krs'n'a calmed them

down and told that at any moment Arjuna will come but He would not be able to maintain His Body until Arjuna came, so he wanted to leave three messages for Arjuna with them. In the meantime the hunter was deep in grief when he came to know his mistake and apologised to Lord Krs'n'a. Lord Krs'n'a forgave the hunter by telling that he did it unknowingly and he would not acquire any sin for this action.

So, the three message for Arjuna to be conveyed by the Avadhutas were, 1) Arjuna will certainly be disturbed to hear this news but he should not harm the hunter. 2) His Body should be cremat-

ed not to be buried. 3)

Third instruction was on some political aspect to shift a particular population from Dwaraka to Mathura.

The two Avadhutas who were with Shrii Krs'n'a requested Him not to leave His Body until Arjuna comes but He refused and left His Body.

When Arjuna arrived and saw what had happened he was completely broken hearted.

Arjuna had been proud of his command of his Ga'nd'iiva [bow] and his excellence in the science of archery. While carrying out the third instruction of shifting the the above mentioned

people from Dwa'raka' to Mathura' he was arrested by the forest rebels. Suddenly he found that his Ga'nd'iiva and knowledge of archery could not do any miracle. Then only he realised that everything was being done by Shrii Krs'n'a Himself. He was just like a puppet in the hands of Shrii Krs'n'a. The supreme surrender came in to his mind. He realised his friend Shrii Krs'n'a was none but Paramapurusa.

Ba'ba' asked Dada Para'sattya'nandaji, "will you also cry when I leave?" Dada replied, "Ba'ba", don't talk like this. You will be with us forever." "No, it is not possible, one day I shall have to leave also." Dada expressed to Ba'ba' that he would not like to see that scene. Ba'ba' commented, "You won't see that."

Years later, 26th October, 1990, Dada Parasattyanandaji was in a remote part of his diocese (Sagar in MP State). After his breakfast he saw the newspaper which said, "The founder of AM Shrii Shrii A'nandamurti has passed away and His last rites will be held today" He was completely in shock. He confirmed the heart-breaking news by telephone and rushed to Kalika'ta' to find that everything was finished. Even Baba's ashes had been carried away. He became furious with the Central workers for not informing him and was fighting with them. But all of a sudden he stopped fighting and became silent. Because he remembered Baba's words, "You won't see that."

Did you forget something ?

Prashant Shankar

I had observed that Margiis would do Namaskar before taking their meals. And I always wondered if it was mandatory to do so and if taking second lesson with ideation was not enough. One day we had the pleasure of Dada Svarupanandaji's company for lunch. We did kiirtan for some minutes and took second lesson. I noticed that he also did Namaskar before starting his meal. So I asked him the reason and the story follows:

One day Dadaji was with Baba and said - "Baba I generally do not forget to take 2nd lesson but sometimes I forget about it". Baba replied :

You know, Svarupananda, even I forget to take second lesson when the food in front of me is delicious !!". He further said "You must make a habit of doing Namaskar before you start your meal. So when it becomes a habit, whenever you eat something you'll definitely do Namaskar and this will remind you to take 2nd lesson."

Indeed the best solution. Then I realised, it's easier to develop physical reflexes than a "mental reflex" (as taking second lesson). And on that, food being the primary weakness, developing a mental reflex on it would definitely improve our consistency over second lesson.

Did you take second lesson before reading this story ?

Dharma Before Clash

Shantatma

In the beginning of his worker life, Dada D got much clash from his supervisor Dada. This situation led even so far that Dada D was about to leave his Acharyaship. Before doing this he thought that he should go to see Baba. He thought this would be the last time he would see Baba in his life.

As he entered Baba's room, Baba asked him to sit down and got very serious. Baba said that there are only two things in life which do not fall. They are: listha (preceptor) and Adharsa (ideology). If one follows a third one and that falls, one will also fall. Baba asked Dada to depend only on listha and Adharsa and not any third entity. After this conversation Dada got back his inspiration to continue adjusting with his supervisor.



Do Your Responsibility

Baba Stories

There was a doctor devotee in Madras who was given the duty to work in Prout. But he thought that he was not so experienced, that he did not know many things and that he was also not efficient. He wondered whether he was able to carry out this responsibility. This issue was going on in his mind. So he came to Jamalpur thinking that he would ask Baba to change his posting and to give it to some other more responsible person. But out of fear of Baba, he didn't say anything.

Baba came to the Jamalpur ashram. He called one Avadhuta and made him sit on His lap. He said that if Parama Purusa so desires, He can give him the power to see the mind of other people. Baba said "Just see, Divyananda, just see the mind of these people". Divyananda began to see.

Then Baba said, "If Parama Purusa so desires, he can give you the power to read the thoughts of other people". Then He told the avadhuta to do it.

Then Baba said, "If Parama Purusa so desires He can give you power to read the thoughts of a man who is in America. Divyananda just see the man in America and go into his mind and read his thoughts." Divyananda began to do it.

Baba said, "People think that they will do things, but it is Parama Purusa who does the things. If responsibility is given, the power is also given and naturally if Parama Purusa wants, then people are made efficient. People should surrender, Parama Purusa will do the things". Then Baba looked

at that devotee and said, "Do you understand"? Then he laughed and kept quiet. The doctor then went to Madras and began to work nicely.

Urlick

from Turiya

During the year 1961, the first book called "Ananda Marga", was published at central office. Dada S was office secretary and in charge of seeing that the many translations of the book were properly translated in both context and spirit. One translation, from a very obscure dialect called "Urlick" came across his desk. He tried high and low to find anyone who knew this dialect - all to no avail. Finally, he approached Baba with the problem. Baba said "Why don't you get the manuscript and you read me the original Bengali and I'll check the grammar and spelling".

Well Dada was very surprised because no one knew that Baba had any knowledge of the Urlick language - but he got the manuscript and Baba proceeded to check it. After some time Baba said to Dada "Please, my eyes are not so good, could you check this character for me?" Without thinking Dada looked at the manuscript and pointed out that there was some error on a curly-cue on one letter. Then Baba said "My boy, why don't we trade for a while, I'll check the Bengali and you read the Urlick." To this day Dada still clearly understands Urlick and speaks it, although he has had no occasion to read in that language since then.

"I want to see you all laughing. It gives me great pleasure to see you laughing. Leave all cares unto me... O be blessed."

-Ba'ha'

Only One Personality

Didi Ananda Sukrti

Before I became an acarya, I was always with the LFTs in Maharlika (Philippines) whenever I got free time from school. During those days in mid-'70s, the LFTs then under the supervision of the late Dada Adveshanandaji were working and dressing up like WTs. They were sent to

spiritual practices and acarya life. It is one of my life's guiding principles.

spoke about why the life of family people is greater than the life of sanyasiis. He said that family people have greater opportunity to serve humanity because they are directly working and in constant contact with the masses. Therefore they have more scope to speed up their spiritual progress. But their life is harder because they have to serve two families - the small and the big family. As a spiritual aspirant, a family person cannot neglect either one. He or she has to serve both.

They had the most unimaginable stories of surrender and devotion when they came back from their fields

different parts of the country to do the most seemingly impossible tasks with the tiny bit of money Dadaji would give them. They had the most unimaginable stories of surrender and devotion when they came back from their fields. I would always eagerly await for their coming to hear their experiences. They became my close friends and I looked up to them with awe and respect, especially when they tell Ba'ba' stories. Then one day, one of the most dynamic LFTs left and went home to her family. She was very popular and many were broken-hearted by her departure. (She later became a WT but left her acaryaship after some years). When Dada Adveshanandaji saw that I was affected, he called me. He said, "I know it is sad that Sister R. left her LFTship but you should remember that there is only one PERSONALITY in this world, and that is BA'BA' only! It's only Him that you should look at."

These words ring in my ears whenever I get clashed with anyone that would affect my

Raising Children

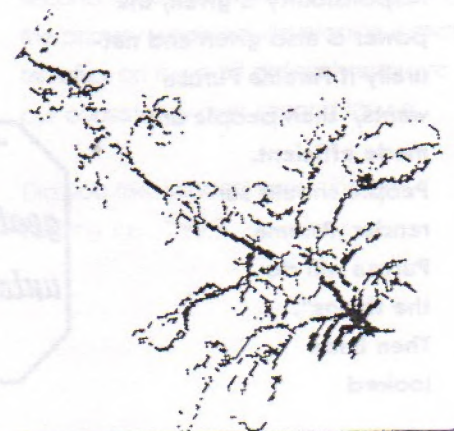
Dada Sarvabhodananda

In one darshan in Patna, there were several mothers present. They were sort of complaining to Baba that they didn't have time to do their sadhana because they had to take care of their children. In a very loving way Baba said "Your children are your sadhana." But some replied that, "Baba we want also to do proper sadhana, but by the time we are done with our children and family we don't have any more energy." Looking and nodding to them directly, He said, "First use all the energy that Paramapursa has given you, and if you need more He'll supply you with more. His source is infinite."

"And I know still further, that for infinite time and infinite space, one will be getting this divine help. You are all spiritual aspirants, you will certainly attain the Supreme Stance and enjoy that Divine Blessedness." -Baba

In one darshan I attended in Patna, Baba

A sanyasi on the other hand has only one - the big family. In the audience there were some young Western Margiis. In their minds they must have been thinking "Wow, I should go back home and become a family person," because immediately Baba raised His finger and said 'No'. He said that at this particular time, humanity is in dire need of dedicated and ideal sanyasiis. Nodding to them, He said, "Embrace only the big family."



Offering to God

When Didi was in her teens she went to spend one week with another Margii family who lived near the border of Bihar and West Bengal. The husband was one of the first family acharyas and everyone had spent time with Baba and was very devoted to Him. One room of their house was a meditation room which contained a special seat for Baba ("asana"). Each day, after cooking each meal, food from the meal would be offered first to Baba in that room so that it would become "prasad." But Didi wondered, "Isn't this a dogmatic practise? These people know Baba so well, and know His ideology—why do they continue this? Is it a ritualistic practise or does Baba really come and take the food?"

There is also a tradition in India that a portion of food from the first harvest of the year should be offered to God. In this family, a delicious kiir of fresh milk and rice was to be offered on this occasion. Didi was asked to make the kiir that would be offered.

Didi bathed, and in a devotional state of mind, went to the kitchen to make the khir. She sang kiirtan continuously as she cooked, and then prepared a small bowl to place in Baba's room. She thought to herself, "This will be the test. Let's see if Baba takes any." A fresh layer of cream had risen to the top of the bowl, so it would be easy to see if the food had been touched. As another precaution, she placed a small plate over the food, and put a small spoon outside the bowl. Then she carefully shut the door.

Didi Ananda Prajina Paramita told the following story during the WWD Women's Retreat at Ananda Madhurii, Gympie. Didi was raised in a Margii family and had the great privilege of meeting with Baba along with her family throughout her childhood. She always thought about becoming about an acharya since she was a young girl. The following story (written up by Kamala) is one of many beautiful spiritual events she has to recount. Didi Prajina Paramita is Sectorial Girls Prout Secretary and stays in Brisbane

Later Didi was in the house with the family. The mother of the house was doing some work in the entry way of the house. Suddenly they heard her calling loudly, "Baba! Baba! Baba! Please stay, please stay!" They ran outside in surprise and saw her running after Baba.

Shortly she collapsed in samadhi, and they saw the form of Baba walking quickly as it disappeared in the distance.

Shortly she collapsed in samadhi, and they saw the form of Baba walking quickly as it disappeared in the distance. The spiritual vibration was so intense and high, no one could speak and the house was permeated with the scent of beautiful flowers.

Didi guessed what had happened and ran towards Baba's room. Inside, the entire atmosphere was suffused with spiritual energy and bliss. Around the bowl of khir there were drops of water (in India, some people lightly splash

water around the plate before eating.) The spoon that had been left beside the bowl was inside the bowl and two spoonfuls of kiir were missing!

Didi sat down and immediately sank into deep meditation. That evening at Dharmacakra the whole family enjoyed blissful meditation, so much that they didn't even feel the time pass.

Some time later, Didi was able to visit Baba who was then in the Patna Jail. It was a three or four hour journey from where she was staying. She was able to go into see Baba in a group of twelve people. She was so shocked and sad to see Baba living in the cramped and degrading conditions of a jail cell that she was in tears before she came into his room. Each person gave pranam and

Baba asked each person his usual question of name and place. But when he came to her he immediately said only, "That was delicious kiir!" Didi collapsed into tears of devotion.

Soon the guards said it was time to leave. As Didi was walking out, she turned back to look again at Baba. Baba told his PA to call her back. Baba said, "When you are considering offering your life in service to a mission, it is proper to give the Guru a test."

LAND FOR ALL

Amritdhara

Secure Land Access

For 5/6th of the world's population, access to land is so insecure that they are unable to establish adequate housing or food gardens, and are unable to form stable and supportive communities. They are preoccupied with survival and are left with little opportunity to even think about environmentally sustainable lifestyles.

Their insecurity leads to desperate foraging of land, conflict, and ultimately to the human and environmental devastation of war.

The problem they face is that there is a limited amount of land, and as with any commodity in the market place, it generally goes to the highest bidder. This competition forces land prices further and further beyond their reach. In the first world as in the third world, only those who are winners can afford to bid for secure land access. No matter what happens with the land after it has been purchased the process of purchasing it is unsustainable because it pushes land further out of the reach of others.

As if this real estate effect wasn't bad enough, secure access to land is put even further beyond reach because of the intensifying competition for jobs world wide. The poorest 5/6th of the global population are simply not in the race for these jobs.

Even in the first world, the job security of many is under threat, and keeping a roof overhead is not so easy.

Social and Environmental Ethics

Keeping the money coming in is what counts whether we are talking about government, individuals or industry. Governments, individuals and industry alike are all

"We should not forget even for a moment that this whole animate world is a large family in which nature has not assigned any property to any particular individual. Individual ownership has been created by selfish opportunists so that they might take advantage of the defects of this system in order to grow fatter in a parasitic way. When the whole property of this universe has been inherited by all creatures, how then can there be any justification for a system in which someone receives a flow of huge excess, while others die for lack of a handful of grain?"

Baba, Problem of the Day, 2)

tied into this competitive market in which ethics easily become a liability. In the model we have de-scribed, even the current welfare cry for "more" adds to the competition. In the first world as in the third world, there is little if any real opportunity to make our work and lifestyle socially and environmentally sustainable.

The bottom line is that we are forced to compete with each other over a fundamental need, land. So long as this remains the case we will remain trapped in the parts we play as victims or oppressors, and economic, social and environmental instability will increase.

Land as Common Wealth

In Australia the principle of government holding land for the commonwealth is well established. It has also long been accepted that an appropriate use of such Commonwealth land is for public housing. Government must buy and retain adequate amounts of land for the needs of the people who have given it a duty for responsible administration. If wisely managed, free access to suburban Commonwealth land could be the basis for

new sustainable employment, and a new option in public housing.

Instead of continuing to give the unsustainable message that everybody must compete for their security, the Caretakers Project shows how any well-organised group of people could fulfil an increasingly important social role which is being neglected. Their job would be to learn the skills of cooperating to provide for their own basic needs of food and housing in a sustainable way, and to freely share their knowledge and experience with the broader community, particularly with other groups interested in taking on the same work. Sustainability would require them to use location, materials, design, and space so as to be respectful of the needs and rights of all.

An essential characteristic of any option which lays claim to being sustainable is that it must also be an option for all.

Free access to suburban public land could be used to establish sustainable suburban communities of the future, provide essential new skills and work, and generate new economic growth.

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